

Remarks

Claims 1 and 6 have been objected to because of insufficient antecedent basis for the limitation "the interior of the boat." Accordingly, the preamble of each of claims 1 and 6 has been amended by insertion of the phrase "that provides illumination for the interior of a trolling boat..." This amendment is supported in the specification at page 3, lines 8-9 and 21-23, page 5, lines 12-14, and page 6, lines 11-15. Withdrawal of the objection to claims 1 and 6 is respectfully requested.

Claims 1 and 6 are each further amended to recite that the motor control compartment comprises a top and a bottom, the top further comprising a front portion adjacent to the interior of the boat and a back portion disposed away from the boat, and further, that a light assembly attached to the motor control compartment is situated so as to provide illumination for the interior of the boat. These amendments are supported in the specification at page 3, lines 19-23, and page 5, lines 1-15.

Claims 2 and 7 are each amended to recite that the light assembly is mounted upon the front portion of the top of the motor control compartment. These amendments are supported in the specification at page 5, lines 11-15.

Claims 3 and 8 are each amended to recite that a portion of the front portion of the top of the motor control compartment is substantially translucent, that the light assembly is contained within the motor control compartment, and that the substantially translucent portion of the front portion of the top of the motor control compartment allows the passage of light from the light assembly to the interior of the boat. These amendments are supported in the specification at page 6, lines 5-15.

Claims 5 and 10 are each amended to recite that the light assembly is powered by the same device as a main drive motor of the boat. These amendments are supported in the specification at page 6, lines 19-21.

Claims 1-2 and 4-5 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated by Cribbs, U.S. Patent No. 5,613,886 ("Cribbs"). Claims 6-7 and 9-10 have also been rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated by Cribbs. In addition, claims 3 and 8 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Cribbs. In light of the amendment of claims 1-3, 5-8, and 10, these rejections are respectfully traversed.

Cribbs discloses an outboard motor-mounted safety light apparatus wherein the safety lights are especially adapted for an outboard motor that is towed by a trailer

(column 1, lines 7-10). That the intended function of the disclosed lights is to serve as safety lights is confirmed by the connection of a light flasher assembly to the electrical lamp assembly, which enables it to emit a flashing light under predetermined conditions (column 3, lines 1-4). The disclosed safety light apparatus provides a single safety light that can serve both when the boat is being towed by a trailer and when the boat is in the water in a stopped or slow speed condition (column 4, lines 19-23).

Cribbs discloses that the electrical lamp assembly of the safety light apparatus is attached to the outside housing of the outboard motor (column 2, lines 45-52). As clearly shown in FIGS. 1 and 2, and especially in FIG. 3, the electrical lamp assembly attached to the outside housing of the motor is disposed facing away from the boat and is therefore incapable of illuminating the interior of the boat, in marked contrast to the light assembly included in the trolling motor assembly of the present invention.

In the rejection of claims 1 and 6, reference was made in the Office Action to attachment of the light assembly to the motor control compartment "at a desired preference." The meaning of this phrase is uncertain; it does not appear in any of the cited portions of Cribbs, which teach that the safety light is mounted on the motor housing, specifically the outside housing. As already discussed, the outside housing faces away from the boat and is an appropriate location for a safety light intended to provide a signal to someone outside the boat, either on a highway or on the water. This location is, however, a distinctly unsuitable location for a light intended to illuminate the interior of the boat for the benefit of someone within the boat.

As is clear from the preceding discussion, the disclosure of Cribbs neither anticipates nor renders obvious the trolling motor assembly of the present invention and its included light assembly. In light of the amendments presented above, withdrawal of all of the §102(b) and §103(a) rejections of the claims is respectfully requested. Claims 1-10 remain in this case, whose prompt allowance is earnestly solicited.

Respectfully submitted,

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